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THE CALL OF INDIA'S CULTURE

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BANARAS

T. L. VASWANI

EAST AND WEST SERIES

[Monthly]

An Interpreter of the Life of the Spirit

THE CALL OF INDIA'S CULTURE

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IMPORTANT

Kindly note that this is a Double Number for the two months,—October and November, 1971.

Our next issue will be the " Special Birthday Number " and will be out on 1st December, 1971.

—The Manager

MESSAGES AND BLESSINGS

Fortunately, I got a copy of the *East and West Series*. I read through the book at a stretch. It made me to think of myself in relation to my country and to Humanity at large. We are here to serve each other, not to gather silver or gold, position or power. Therefore, I regard the *East and West Series* as a torch-bearer which can guide our youths to the right path of life and lead them to the goal. Kindly accept my congratulations.

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J. M. Sethi
New Delhi

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(*Mrs.*) *Marie A. All*
U. S. A.

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FOREWORD*

The Gurukul Kangri is one of modern India's gifts to education. In connection with the Gurukul anniversary, this year, a Conference was held, named the "Indian Culture Conference." Representatives of different religions met together at this Conference: and every representative stressed his religion's contributions to Indian culture. The following pages embody the full text of the thesis I was asked to write for the Conference, as its president.

Surveying the world's situation, I have felt, again and again, that a crying need of our civilisation is a new creative movement. The new apotheosis of the material interests of life has created, in some places, a religion of the bourgeoise and, in some others, a religion of the Bolsheviki. The religion of the bourgeoise is a religion of possessions and bank balances, of comfort and capitalism. The religion of the Bolsheviki is a religion of materialistic Marxism.

What a man effectively believes in is his religion. And Bolshevism believes effectively,—violently,— in Marx and his disciple, Lenin. Marx did well in bringing out an element of truth long neglected : but he went wrong in confounding the economic with the materialistic. The importance of the economic factor must be recognised : but the economic interpretation must not be merged in a materialistic conception of history.

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* Written in 1930.

The neo-materialism of Marx cannot satisfy the mind of man eager to know the universe. As a distinguished historian of our days, Prof. See of the University of Rennes, says in a significant little sentence :—"Reality is much more complex than Karl Marx imagined."

It is unfortunate that in the new reactions of Russian political thought on India, there has been initiated a compaign against religion,—and that in the name of "nationalism"! I shudder to think of a "nationalism" denying the divine values of life. And my reading of Indian history has taught me that religion is an important element in the thought and life of India. Only let us be careful not to confound religion with creeds and forms. Sectarianism, as I have often said, is the very negation of religion.

Russia does well to recognise the values of the modern. New world-forces are marching on, and India must move with them, or be left behind. But Russia sins against the deeper spirit of the modern in trying to eliminate religion. Russia has given ear to the capricious German thinker who said that God was dead! Surely, the *Ātman* or Consciousness is a better clue to the cosmos than material forces : and the witness of recent science seems to be that the so-called material forces themselves are immaterial.

It is a pity Soviet Russia opposes "culture" to "religion" : and many of the young men in India echo the Soviet view. Young India's malady is imitation. In India is spreading fast a "Godless culture" aiming at secularisation of all thought and faith and life.

What I submit in these pages is, in part, this,—that religion and culture,—understood in their essence,—are not rivals. Religion, viewed historically and sociologically, has made important contributions to culture and civilisation. The great spiritual leaders of the race have appeared in times of crisis and proclaimed, each a religion, as an answer to the deepest needs of his age. Historically, the great religious geniuses of the race have been saviours of civilisations.

Not the prophets and saints but many of their disciples have, again and again, put up a fight against the spirit of religion,—which is the spirit of freedom and fellowship. So it is that, again and again, the original inspiration has been stifled, and inner spiritual values have been lost in mazes of dogmas, creeds, and controversies. Hence the necessity of repeated renewal and rejuvenation of religion. The prophets and saints come with messages of renewal and liberation.

In a very real sense, religion is culture. The ancient Indian name for religion is *Ātmavidyā*, which means "culture of the Self." Humanism, in the West, turns away from God. The humanism of the Gita and the Upanishads turns to God. God Himself is termed *Purusha*, the Supreme Person.

Both religion and culture ask for inner renewal of the individual, for apprehension and appreciation of the deeper values of life,—for liberation from within. This inner renewal is needed to transform our nervous, heavy-laden, technical civilisation into a new civilisation of brotherliness and broad human sympathies,—a civilisation of simplicity and strength. To such a civilisation, the rishis have borne witness through the ages.

And the rishis belong not to India alone. In every religion, in every age, in East as in West, have the rishis appeared,—the true super-men of history,—men who have realised the harmony of culture and religion. In the rishis may be found the real key to history. And in a new, vital, creative cooperation with the wisdom of the rishis is the hope of India,—ancient and gifted but, today, alas! a bewildered, broken nation.

Something better, broader, nobler, richer, something more true to the spirit of Indian history and genius of Indian life, something much bigger and more vital than Karl Marx's socialism, is India's need. Marx and Lenin were great, but greater were the rishis,—they who saw the One Self in all! Their message is what young men need to make a new India. For they realised that true freedom is fellowship with humanity, and that true democracy is built not in blood and bomb but in the law of brotherhood and love.

T. L. VASWANI

THE NEW RELIGION

To come together is to understand. To understand is to love. And I am happy representatives of different faiths are come together at this Conference to indicate the contributions of religion to Indian culture. To you all I give the salutations of my spirit.

India is the world's ancestral home of religious consciousness. Yet in India, too, interest in religion has greatly diminished in recent years. Economics and politics are, today, stronger motives than religion or culture. Yet I believe in the crisis of the new questioning spirit of these days is being born a new faith in reason, a new yearning for simple truths, for a rejuvenated life, for a new creative activity. From the very homeland of Bolshevism come voices that a new religion is needed for a new renewal of life.

The new criticism is a call to reconstruction in religion. And in the revolt of a section of Indian youths against religion, I hear a cry for a revaluation of religious values. The history of humanity is a story of repeated recoveries and re-discoveries of religion.

We meet in no arrogant, controversial spirit. We meet, I am sure, in a spirit of fellowship. Spiritual pride is a sin against the spirit, at once of culture and religion. It cannot be that spiritual truths are the monopoly of any one race or religion. Whether you view them as human discoveries or as divine offerings, they cannot be the final word of life. Who is there who would say, he sees the Truth as God sees it? All religious knowledge, I humbly submit, is at best symbolical, analogical. When, for instance, we speak of God as "Our Father," we use that word as a symbol. The letter killeth : the spirit saveth.

Einstein,—the greatest Jew since Jesus,—has given us his fruitful theory of relativity, and we begin to understand that all our knowledge is relative to our reference-mechanism. Who, then, will say he knows the Truth in its transcendent fullness? I recall the words of the *Kenopanishad* :—"Who does not know, knows. Who knows, does not know. That is not known to those who know." Divine revelation may flow through a mighty sage, but he, too, is a medium of finite equipment.

Veil upon veil will lift,
But there must be
Veil upon veil behind!

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THE SCIENCE OF LIFE

It is desirable, I think, to understand carefully, at the very outset, the meanings of the words, "religion" and "culture."

What is religion? It is difficult to define it. It is necessary, I think, to interpret it in terms of life,—of aspiration, experience, and achievement. Else would religion be no better than a custom, a ceremonial, a form or formula, a thing extern. Whatever the name of this ism or that, the essence of religion must be some inner experience, some affirmation and appreciation of the verities and values of life. To me religion is the very meaning of life.

I confess this English word, "religion," is not a very happy one. It has Roman associations. The word, derived from Latin "*ligo*," "I bind," means, literally, "what binds." Surely, I say to myself, what we are seeking is not what binds but liberates, what offers us release from our cramping, often oppressive, environment. We seek freedom from thraldom. If religion be a bondage then, surely, religion becomes no better than slave-mentality, and Nietzsche did well to condemn it.

And true it is, that religion has often been confounded with customs, rituals, myths, legends, beliefs, institutions, organisations, which have offered resistance to Truth.

Religions have been charged with enjoining or encouraging acts such as self-mutilation and suicide, animal and human sacrifices, child-slaughter and widow-burning, intoxication and sexual immorality.

I am afraid this word religion is not a very happy one. I prefer the ancient Indian word, *darshan*, which means vision. From the bondage of customs and creeds and isms and organisations, we seek escape into a vision that uplifts, inspires, and sustains.

At the forefront of every one of the world's great faiths stand men of vision,—seers of the Open Secret,—sages and saints, Buddhas and Mahaviras, mighty prophets and rishis. They depart : their visions live after them,—for sometime. Then the disciples imprison the liberating visions into creeds, customs, institutions. The spirit departs : the shell remains.

Thus the free *dhamma* of the Buddha was entangled in a snare of ritualism and supernaturalism. The message of Muhammad, inspired by a vision of the One God, was infected with literalism and externalism. The Gospel of Oriental Christ, with its noble emphasis on "Blessed are the meek," —and meekness is not weakness,—was imprisoned in big ecclesiastic organisations and dominated by a Western environment : and the Christianity of the nations of Europe has become a caste-religion of race-superiority, a religion of war and violence,—a religion of Odin!

So we know how in Hinduism the vision of the Vedic rishis has been trampled upon by customs, creeds and ceremonies. What the sad world needs is,—men of vision. Not isms but *darshan*.

Darshan of what? Of Life,—and its laws! Significant is the ancient word *dharma*. It means, literally, that which holds, upholds, sustains. It means the "law," "norm," "order." The word, *dharma*, reminds one of the Chinese Tao. To go against Tao, the *dharma*, the Great Law, is to walk in the way of destruction. "The root of the people is *dharma* : without *dharma* they perish," says the *Mahābhārata*.

Darshan of *dharma*, vision of the laws of Life,—there is the heart of religion. "There is nothing higher than the *dharma*," says the *Brihadaranyakopanishad*. Religion is a vision of the laws of Life. The rishis were sons and seers of the *dharma*. May I not say, then, that religion is a science of Life? Yes,—Religion is a science. Man liveth by knowledge, by science,—not by creeds and forms.

The word, "Veda", means "knowledge." Does not Manu say :—"He only has religion who has the eye of discrimination?" And by knowledge is meant not tit-bits of information,—the manifold of sense-experience,—but understanding of the laws of Life. An eminent thinker of our times, —Count Keyserling,—uses a significant phrase, "creative understanding." The knowledge of which I speak is creative understanding.

Isms have quarrelled with science. But there is no conflict between religion and science. Surely, religion is science. Religion is the supreme science of life, the science of the Spirit. The Spirit is creative Life.

If religion, at its best, is a discovery, a revelation of the Spirit, is not science, too, at its best, a revelation of the mind of God? Does not science, also, live by a vision of infinity? Does not science reveal the wonder of planet upon planet, world upon world,—in an endless procession? If there is infinity above, is there not, also, infinity below? For every atom is a system. And how like a solar system is the atomic system! Round a central sun revolve the planets : so round the nucleus of the atom revolve electrons. And the revolution of the electrons, like that of the planets, is according to uniform laws. Science, in the measure in which it discloses a realm of law and order,—and more, a magnificent kingdom of evolution in which things are not static but are moving onward, moving forward, unfolding even as bud unfolds into flower,—science, I say, with its ever-widening revelation of the wonder of the world, is to me another Veda.

Religion, then, is a *darshan*, vision of *dharma*,—a vision of the laws of Life. Science is a body of laws. Religion is science of the Spirit. Not a set of dogmas, but *ātmavidyā*. Not a code of doctrines in the name of which men have resisted truth and love and life, but *Brahmagnāna*. Not changeless tradition but an evolving experience, a growing realisation.

If, indeed, religion be a revelation then, surely, as God is Life Inexhaustible, so surely, His revelation is not exhausted but is perpetual,—not a dead matter of dates and documents but a perpetually renewing process of life,—*Sanātanam*, as the scriptures call it,—*Sanātanam* and, therefore, an ever-present actuality.

The true *Sanātanam* transcends all traditions and flows into the time-process, the stream of life. The true *Sanātanam* is life,—the life creative.

And even as the sun sends out its rays into a tree and makes the tree fruitful, even so the *Sanātanam*, the Eternal, sends out Its rays into the life of man, age after age, and makes humanity fruitful.

Religion is *shakti*. The *darshan*, the vision of Life and its laws, carries with it an energy that revolutionises life. The rishis and prophets and saints have been the greatest revolutionaries in history.

Let me say this, too, that this vision, which is a revolution, is from one point of view an achievement, if from another a revelation. For it is denied to all whose quest does not become a conquest. There is no *darshan* without *sādhanā* (self-discipline).

Darshan, *dharma*, *shakti*, *sādhanā*,—these are the four *angas*, the four limbs, in the living Veda of religion, as I understand it. Religion is vision of the *dharma*, the law of Life. This vision is achieved through *sādhanā*. And this vision flows as *shakti* into the stream of history, civilisation, life.

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SEEKING THE ONE BELOVED

It will be the privilege of representatives of every religion to speak of its special contribution to Indian culture. I have not the right to represent any religion. Like some of the *bhikkhus* of ancient India, I have passed "from home to homelessness." I bear with me the badge of no special *samāj* or church. I wish to see in every one a revelation of the One Universal Mind, the One *Ātman*, whom we all in various ways are seeking. Indeed, I have often felt that diverse religions are not really isolated but are branches of the one Tree of Life whose roots are in God. The various religions are to me elements in the one Plan of Evolution,—the one Purpose of God,—to educate the human race.

I do not divide religions into "true" and "false." I regard none of the world-faiths as false. The altars are many, and the flowers brought thither are of different colours; but the worship of all is turned toward the One of the Ancient Days, "the One whom the sages call by many names." The mandirs and mosques and churches are many : but every sincere worshipper seeks the One Beloved.

"On whatever road men approach Me, on that road do I meet them, for all the roads are Mine," saith Sri Krishna. And I recall the words of Jesus :—"In my Father's House are many mansions." And the words of the *Qur'an* :—"The East belongeth to God and the West belongeth to God. And wheresoever ye turn, there is the

Face of God." So I rejoice in the contributions of every religion to culture and civilisation, to the health of humanity, to the happiness of communities and peoples, to the purpose of the ages.

I believe profoundly that the spring-tides of history are due to spiritual influences. Technics may give you comforts of life : but the dynamics, the inner moving forces of true civilisation, I humbly submit, are spiritual. The ages of light are the ages of true spiritual culture. These alternate with the ages of darkness which are due to decline in the culture of the Spirit. For progress is not absolute, not like the Roman road straight, but spiral.

Today, we are in a period which is, partly, invaded by forces of darkness. Today, civilisation is in danger of falling beneath the burden of its aggressive imperialism and industrialism. Man, instead of being a master of his machine, is in danger of being its slave.

Industrialism, with its cry for mass production, has meant class-cleavage and denial of the simple life. Mass production has been emphasised, but the ethic of distribution has been ignored. And the appalling poverty of the peasant in India and the profound unrest of the worker in Europe are impeachments of the current order at the bar of eternal justice. There is divorce between economics and ethics, between imperialism and humanity. A new outlook is needed,—a new culture of the spirit.

As I read the story of man, I see an intimate connection between culture and religion. That great philosopher of history, Spengler, rightly says :—"Culture is ever synonymous with religious creativeness." Indeed, it is out of a world-view, a world-picture of the soul and her destiny, that culture in different forms arises. The great Vedic seer, Yāgnavalkya, says :—"Through piety of mind comes knowledge." And Schiller who, also, was a rishi said that the man who had art and science had, also, religion. Liberation, *mukti*, is the master-word of religion : and a man of true culture is a man of inner liberation, a man of the free mind.

In ancient India more, perhaps, than in many other countries, the relation between culture and religion was of a very intimate,—I would venture to say, organic,—character. During none of its great periods was culture in India a rebel against, or worked independent of, the inspiration of religion.

The temple was the centre at once of religion and culture. On the temple walls stood pictures of sages and heroes, of saints and *bhaktas* : and every picture was a teacher. The temple was the place of festival, and festivals brought together men from different parts,—men of culture and character,—to sing and speak to the multitudes and so to pass on to the masses the message of the great ideals of India. In the temple were taught the science and art of music. Indeed, the science of song was known as another Veda,—the *Gandharva Veda*,—and was evolved from chanting of the Vedic hymns. The seven musical notes, to which reference is made in a Vedic hymn, and the wind-instruments, cymbals, and orchestra were, in their right functions, an expression of man's aspiration to the Eternal.

THE MODEL MAN OF CULTURE

What is culture? Matthew Arnold says :—"Culture is contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world." And by this he means the best in European literature, philosophy and art. But, surely, civilisation has not exhausted itself on the shores of the Mediterranean : and the scholar is not always a cultured man. I have seen more culture in some peasants' cottages than in many a college club. Culture must not be confounded with scholarship, nor specialisation, nor criticism, nor the reading of European classics.

The English word, "culture," it is true, is given to us by Bacon. But for a philosophy of it you must go beyond Bacon to Krishna and the Buddha and the rishis of humanity like Yāgnavalkya and Kapila, Shankara and Nagarjuna, Averroes and al-Ghazali, Kant and Goethe. Bacon did not live up to his vision of culture. For true culture is rooted in a life of the Spirit. Bacon's mind, alas! was rooted in a life of desires. His greatest book, *The Advancement of Learning*, fashions an interesting "globe of knowledge," but it lacks the larger light of the inner, independent life.

"Culture" is a term of "agriculture." To "culture" is to "cultivate",—the ground, the *kshetra*,—as the Gita calls it. The soul's *kshetra* must be cultivated. How? By disciplining desires and emotions. I would connect the word "Krishna" with "*krish*" (to plough), "*krishi*" (cultivation).

Krishna is to me the very incarnation of the soul of culture; and the Gita is one of the world's greatest text-books of culture.

In the second *adhyāya* (chapter) of the Gita, a fine pen-picture is given us of the model man of culture. He is the *sthita-pragna*, the man of balance, stable of mind, steadfast, loosed from passion, fear and anger, yet full of love in his heart,—the man of self-mastery and sweetness, of light and love. The word, "Buddha," too, I interpret to mean the "man of culture." And the Buddha expresses the philosophy of culture in the following significant words :—

> I plough and sow : and from my ploughing and sowing, I rear immortal fruit. My field is religion. The weeds I pluck up are passions. My plough is wisdom. My seed is purity.

That there is a seed of the Spirit in every man is a thought emphasised at once by the Stoics of Rome and the sages of India. Culture, then, is a thing of the Spirit.

May I not say, also, that culture-consciousness is a movement towards the Light? I recall the wonderful prayer of the Vedic Rishi:—"*Tamaso mā jyotir gamaya*." "From darkness lead me to the Light!" With the rishis, this aspiration was an energy of daily life. What a difference between Bacon and Yāgnavalkya! The one was a scholar, the other a seer. The one had scholarship, the other creative understanding. Bacon's mind was rich, but his life was poor. The rishis' minds reflected the light of a rich, luminous life. The rishis are the flowers of this earth-evolution. In them man shows the beauty of a better than he, the glory of a greater than he,—the beauty and glory of the true superman. The rishis are the saints of culture. To them belong history,—to them and to the heroes of action. To none else! To none else!

Scholarship may be proud: culture is humble. "*Vidyā dadāti vinayam.*" "Culture's gift is humility." For the man of culture understands that knowledge is infinite, and that none may boast of being in complete possession of what is, in its very nature, *ananta*, endless. Culture is rich and humble. Culture gazes at the Beautiful and is simple. A prayer in the *Rig Veda* says:—"Thou, Gracious One, givest wisdom to the simple!"

Culture worships Truth. And in the temple of Truth there is room for both *sva* (one's own) and the stranger. Beyond the communal, beyond the national, beyond the regional, beyond the racial, rises the vision of culture. She welcomes Truth from all quarters. With joy the rishis sat at the feet of Greek astronomers to learn of them new astronomical truths. They borrowed, too, some astronomical terms, but put upon them the Aryan stamp. For culture does not imitate. Imitation is slavishness.

There was, also, a chair of Yavana (Greek) Philosophy in an Indian University, and thither, from far and near, foreign students and teachers came and found a hospitable home.

Slavishness, imitation, intolerance, aggressiveness, narrowness, coarseness are sins against culture. Inner independence, simplicity, refinement, large-mindedness, humility, free activity, rich vital idealism,—are marks of the man of culture.

THE LIVING RELIGIONS

What does India owe to various religions in the departments of culture,—is the question which representatives of different faiths will consider with a knowledge and authority which I cannot claim. I can but, in a brief hurried sketch, indicate the faith in me that Indian culture has been influenced by every one of the living religions,—Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam and Christianity.

Judaism, too, is in India. India, the mother of religions, has, also, a Jewish community. There are, in Bombay and Poona, white Jews who claim to be descendants of the Palestinian Jews. But the Jews all over the world number less than one percent of the world's population. In India, the number of Jews is exceedingly small, and their influence on Indian thought and life is smaller still. Moses, the Jewish prophet, who renounced the Pharaoh's palace to live and die among the poor, persecuted people of Israel,—Moses, the man of renunciation and resolve, has a fascination for not a few of us in India, and his name has gone into some of the hymns of the Brahmo Samaj. And Jewish monotheism, with its noble insistence on the "One without a second," is not without its appeal to the theistic churches in India. Indeed, to some of us the God of Moses,—Yahweh,—whose name is declared to be, "I Am that I Am," is reminiscent of the ancient sacred Aum.

Nor does Zoroastrianism seem to have influenced much the culture of India. Hindu culture has influenced the Parsi community. But to receive is, also, to react. Zoroastrianism, with its emphasis on purity, is in tune with some of the *sādhanās* of the Hindus, whom Sir George Birdwood in his book, named *Sva*, characterises as "the cleanest people on the earth." Again, has not Zoroastrian dualism its affinities with the Sānkhya doctrine of Purusha and Prakriti?

Islam's contributions cannot be so easily passed over. "The ink of the scholar," said the Prophet of Arabia, "is as invaluable as the blood of the martyr." And one of the beautiful Mulsim sayings has it that "the world is supported by four things,—the learning of the wise, the justice of the great, the prayers of the good, and the valour of the brave." Indeed, Islam held aloft the torch of culture in Europe, in the darkness of the Middle Ages. It was the sons of Islam who arrested the decline of civilisation in Spain and France. They built universities : they taught chemistry, astronomy and geography to Europe.

In India, Islam and the Hindu faith acted and reacted on each other. The rosary, a symbol of Siva, was taken up by the Muslims as a symbol of piety. Sufism was born of marriage between Hindu and Muslim cultures.

I come from the little sub-province called Sind: and I am free to confess that Sind opened the gateway to Islam in India. In the Punjab, Islam helped in the birth of Urdu literature. In Sind, Islam helped in the creation of Sufi culture. The greatest poet of Sind, Shāh Abdul Latīf, was a Sufi born in a high Muslim family. Him we salute as the uncrowned king of Sind. His *kāfīs* (songs) have gone into Hindu homes and Hindu temples. Abdul Latīf, Sachal, Bekas, Bedil,—four of the great seers and singers of Sind,—were all born in a Muslim environment : and the value of their contributions to Sindhi literature cannot be overrated.

The scholar will note the relations and reactions of Islam and the religious movement initiated by Guru Nānak. It is significant that in the *Granth Sāhib* are incorporated some of the hymns of Muslim singers. The tomb of Pir Shams Tabriz still influences Hindu consciousness in Multān. The Tāj,—one of the world's masterpieces,—and the Muslim buildings erected in Delhi and Agra under Muslim rule are a witness to Islam's contributions to architecture in India.

The Ahmadiyā movement, the Aligarh movement, and Bahaism are other influences to be taken note of. And Dr. Iqbal's poetry, though unduly influenced by Nietzsche, has yet a note of its own, and is a contribution to Indian culture. Islam could have exerted better influence, if the Muslims had assimilated better the ideal of Akbar,—the Muslim king who frankly promoted Hindu culture,—and if the Muslims had abandoned the warpath, remembering the words of the *Qur'an*, "We make no difference between the Prophets," and the words of Muhammed, "Let us be like the trees that yield their fruit to those who throw stones at them."

Christianity has been in India since at least the fourth century, when the Syrian Church of Travancore and Cochin was founded. Can it be that the Christian Church had made no contribution to Indian thought?

"The faith of early Christians," said Nietzsche, "was a continual suicide of reason." Nietzsche was a critic and could not understand Jesus the Yogi. Nor could he understand the life of the early Christians inspired by the life and death of gentle Jesus. Nietzsche, with his Western doctrine of aggressiveness, could not appreciate the Gospel of the Golden Rule.

The early Christians were men of faith : this they opposed to Nero's force. The early Christians believed in Jesus and his Gospel of Love and so opposed military service and the cruel gladiatorial games. The early Christians were *bhaktas* of the Lord. Today, alas! Christian nations are imperialist exploiters of the weaker races. Today, Christian nations sit heavy on the life of Asia. They have torn up the "Sermon on the Mount" to write a new sermon on race-suicide through violence and war. Not on this account, however, must we belittle the influence of Christian missions on the thought and life of India.

With these missions are associated some great names. One thinks of Monte Carvino,—he who, as early as the thirteenth century, anticipated that the chaos in India meant inevitably that the day of European domination was coming. One thinks of St. Xavier, who reclaimed the untouchables, reformed the fisher-folk, and brought whole villages into the Catholic fold. One thinks of Schwartz, who worked among the masses. One thinks of Alexander Duff, apostle of higher education in India. One thinks of Carey and Ward and Henry Martyn, who worked with singular perseverance and singular devotion to the Master.

The Christian missions, it is true, have often belittled the value of Indian culture. But not, therefore, must we be blind to their services. The Christian missions did noble work in the Telugu country during the great famine of 1877–78. They have done wonderful work among the *chāmārs* and sweepers in Agra, among the Khāsis of Assam, the Konds and Santals in Bengal and irrigation colonies of cultivators in the Punjab.

Christian missionaries have done commendable work through medical missions and Dufferin Hospitals. The Christian missions have looked after leper asylums and started schools for the blind and deaf and dumb. The Christian missions have started girls' schools and colleges, have translated the Bible,—a document of unquestioned literary value,—into vernaculars, and have had their share in opening the intellectual intercourse between India and the West.

The Christian missions have been instrumental in bringing Hindu consciousness in contact with the gentle and gracious figure of Jesus, the Yogi of Jerusalem. Amid the dark shadows of an imperialism, which has turned traitor to the vision of truth and love, India has seen something of the Face of Christ. Jesus has influenced some of the great leaders of the Brahmo Samaj: and Sri Rāmakrishna Paramahansa,—the saint of Dakshineshwara,—loved the picture of Jesus and burnt incense before it.

Did India reject Buddhism? Or did she absorb it? Buddhism, in its early days, initiated a movement of renaissance in India and, later, carried to far-off countries the message of the very soul of

Indian culture. And was not the *māyā* doctrine of Shankara influenced by the Buddhist *sunyavāda*? Suffering, said the Buddha, was due to *tanhā*, *trishnā*, craving, thirst. And this, he further pointed out, was due to *avidyā*, ignorance. Do we not meet with the same idea in the metaphysic of the Vedānta?

The Buddha's protest against animal sacrifices was effective. And am I wrong in thinking that the Buddhist ideal of *dharma* has been India's ideal of spiritual culture, age after age? "*Dharma*," we read, "includes freedom from self, purity." In Asoka's reign, also, arose a new type of religious architecture. The Ajantā sculpture and the Sānchi architecture are among the contributions of Buddhism to Indian culture.

Jainism and Sikhism,—each opened a significant chapter in the history of Indian culture. Sikhism is one of the youngest religions; Jainism one of the most ancient. For Mahavira, a contemporary of the Buddha, did not found but re-proclaimed the Jaina Dharma. Mahavira, great atonce in culture and *tapasyā*, is regarded by the Jains as their latest Tirthankāra. His life of singular beauty and singular sacrifice needs to be better known to the world.

Jainism has a doctrine of matter which reminds one of Sānkhya. The Jain thinkers have developed, at some length, the suggestive doctrine that matter is indefiniteness. And Shankara's doctrine of *māyā* has its relations, also, with the Jain doctrine of *anekāntavāda*. If *māyā* be from one point of view *shakti*, is not *māyā* from another point of view indefiniteness? The Jain contributions to logic, psychology and architecture are important. Yet more important are the Jain contributions in the domain of ethics and spiritual life. The Jains evolved systems of Yoga: and the Jain doctrine of *trīratna* ("three jewels") and five *vratas* (vows) of *dhyāna* and *tapas* should have deep interest for all students of spiritual culture.

Critics have often said that Jainism is in conflict with civilisation. I rather think that the Jain *darshan* of *karma* and *ahimsā* is needed to save civilisation and arrest the spirit of violence which has gained ascendency, again and again, in the historic process and marred the purpose of human evolution.

The Sikh faith inspired by a mighty vision of one God, one Humanity, one Brotherhood, developed a culture which spread beyond India to Kabul, Kandhār and Turkestān. The Sikh faith has given us the great scripture, the *Granth Sāhib*. I regard it as the world's first great scripture of synthesis in that century. In the *Granth* are brought together sayings and songs of Hindus and Muslims. Of the four gates to the Golden Temple of Amritsar, one is meant specially for the Muslims, as the others are meant for the Hindus, Sikhs and Christians respectively. Why may we not regard the world's religions as gates to the one Temple of the Spirit? And why can they not come together in the one service of Humanity?

True culture is broad-minded and, therefore, humble. Sikh literature is charged with the aspiration to practise humility in daily life. The thought is breathed out, again and again, in the pages of the *Granth Sāhib* that hard-heartedness fetters. That humility is strength and not a "slave-virtue," as Nietzsche mistakenly thought, is an idea sung and re-sung in Sikh literature. Thus we read in a Sikh hymn:—

Humility is my mace,
And being the dust of all men's feet
Is my two-edged sword:
These no evil-workers can withstand.

Culture and cruelty do not go together.

"Be tender to all things," said Guru Har Rai, "even to flowers." Seeing a flower crushed at his feet, his eyes were touched with tears! And the end of culture is *sevā* (service). The Sikhs developed a wonderful spirit of *tahal*, service. To a big official, Guru Arjun said:—"Be the dust of the feet of poor travellers." Sikh culture reflected itself, also, in a new conception of the dignity of labour. Guru Angad earned his livelihood by twisting twine into rope.

Humility, tenderness, and *sevā*,—marks of Sikh culture,—were no "slave-virtues" with the Sikh community. Guru Gobind Singh, a great scholar who had a number of Sanskrit and Persian books translated into *bhāshyā*, showed how culture could be combined with heroism of the highest type. The Sikh temples developed into centres atonce of culture and manliness. The Sikh culture of *shakti* has inspired matchless deeds of sacrifice, and gives a deathless value to Sikh history.

SONS OF LIGHT

Rich have been the contributions of the ancient faith known as Hinduism. May I not speak of the Hindu *dharma* as the mother of Indian culture?

The word, "Hindu," does not occur in the ancient books. In them and on inscriptions is found the word, "Ārya," which means "noble," "manly," "civilised," "cultured." The word, "Hindavat," (plural of "Hindu") has been found in a copper-plate inscription of the twelfth century.

The word "Hindustan" is significant. This word is derived from the word "Sindhustan." "Sindhustan" means " the abode of the Sindhu." In Sind flows the Sindhu, the strong river whose praises are sung in Vedic *mantras*. And the meaning of the word, "Sindhu," is "that which flows on, flows on, flows on." "Sindhu" is a symbol of progress. As Tennyson tells us in his two beautiful lines:—

Men may come and men may go:
But I go on for ever.

Kingdoms have come and kingdoms have crumbled, but the Sindhu goes on! Dynasties have appeared and disappeared, but the Sindhu flows on! Sindhustan, the land of the Sindhu, is the land of the people who go on, go on, go on.

Unroll the pages of history: what do you find? Kingdoms and empires have appeared and disappeared, but our beloved Motherland goes on!

Hindustan means, literally, a land of eternal progress, a land of the people who march onward, forward. Onward! Forward! This should be the motto of the people of this ancient country.

Shakti and progress go together. Vital people are progressive. So were the Hindus, in the long ago. And they contributed much to the thought and life of India and other nations. Hindustan,—Sindhustan,—was a leader of civilisation.

May there not be yet another interpretation of Hindustan, the Land of the Indu, the moon? The moon is a symbol of purity. India means the Land of the moon. When the Greeks visited this land, they were deeply impressed with these three things concerning the people,—their culture, their truthfulness and their purity. Purity was the one great motive of Hindu civilisation.

Is not purity the one supreme lesson for us to learn in this earth-evolution? For here we come to learn to subdue matter to a spiritual purpose, to conquer the flesh, to transform desires into aspirations and the body into a temple of the Spirit. The danger ahead of current civilisation is its blindness to the vision of purity.

Brahmacharya was the basis of Hindu education and Hindu civilisation. "Take us safe across the darkness!" was the constant prayer of the rishi. There is but one darkness,—the darkness of desires. To know the meaning of life is to go beyond this darkness and to enter into the light,—the Light Undying, to quote from an Upanishad, "dwelling in the inner heart." And it seems to me Hindu culture, at its best, was a movement towards Light. "Light! More Light!" has been the aspiration of Hindu consciousness.

The emphasis of modern nations is on forms of government. Constitution, political machinery, have their value. Great is their need, but there is something much greater,—the spirit of humanity. Democracies without the controlling vision of humanism have, in the West, developed aggressive nation-cults and imperialist ethics of the "white man's burden"! They move in Satan's circle of war and violence. "Light! more Light!" is the nations' need.

Modern civilisation almost threatens to fulfil the prediction of Samuel Butler that machines would displace mankind. Is it mere coincidence that warfare and machine-domination have run parallel in our times? Modern democracies have their "leaders," great in organization, rich in resources, strong in their power over the mass-mind. But more than "leaders," more than "organisers," are needed, men of true spiritual culture, men of the understanding heart, seers and prophets, pathfinders, light-bringers, torch-bearers.

India developed culture-states in the long ago. In culture-states, not in aggressive, exploiting imperialist states, is the hope of the modern world. Equality,—is the slogan of modern democracies. Yet the Asian nations are being exploited! A culture-state believes in equality but, also, in quality.

In modern European states there is a conflict, open or veiled, between religion and civilisation. The Hindu culture-states sought to harmonise the two. The spirituality of Hindu culture, in the days when India was truly great because truly vital, was balanced by internal and foreign trade.

The Hindu culture-state sought to harmonise *dharma* with *artha*.

Every national group has a "centre of gravity." The Hindu "centre of gravity" was not gold but God. The Vedic Āryas had not the Egyptians' passion for architectural skill, nor the Teuton's genius for plunder and conquest. The Vedic Āryas wished to be free men in God. Free and, therefore, far away from the *bhoga* and pleasure-cults which are the malady of modern civilisation,—free and, therefore, rich in qualities of manhood,—free with the freedom of the sons of the Spirit.

I interpret the word, "Ārya," to mean "the free man." And the ancient Āryan pattern of the free man was the rishi, the sage. The rishi was the real ruler. Greater than the *rājāh*, who sat on the throne, was the poor, humble sage. For rich was he in the wealth of wisdom: loyal was he to the Royal within. Bhartrihari rightly says:—"The sages, however poor they be, are the real rulers of the country." Plato dreamt of philosopher-kings. The dream had long ago been verified in India. For she had built up culture-states guarded by *kshatriya-rājāhs* but led, largely, by the wisdom of the rishis.

The sage is the great ideal of the Gita. The sage, the rishi, the man of light, was the true culture-man of ancient Āryavarta.

Modern democracies are swayed by men of tumult and tempest, men strong in the capacity to strike and stir up noise and excitement, men of stress and storm, men of heat and passion and strife. Where, where are the Sons of the Light?

THE SCRIPTURE OF THE SEASONS

It may be said, I think, without exaggeration that religion has always been the inspiration of Hindu culture. Scholastic, controversial, logic-chopping elements have appeared, again and again. in the long history of Hindu culture. But, again and again, have been released new, fresh renaissance-forces to sweep away scholastic decadence. Hindu culture has moved in an atmosphere of nature : and an analogy from nature may well represent the different stages of vitality and decadence in the history of Hindu culture. These stages are four, as four are the seasons of nature.

I regard the Vedic Age as the very spring of Hindu culture. The Āryan lived then in vital fellowship with nature,—rich source of vitality in literature, philosophy, art, science and civilisation. The Vedic Ārya developed a culture essentially rural in its inspiration, intuitive in its perception, heroic in its achievements.

After spring comes summer. The summer-stage is reflected in the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata*,—the two People-epics,—which show the marvellous strength of the constructive culture of the Hindu race. The *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* are portrait galleries of characters well worth a study by students of human culture.

Think of Sri Rāma,—avatār of *shakti!* Think of Sitā, picture of purity! Think of Hanumān,—model to us all in *brahmacharya* and hero-worship! Think of Arjuna,—representative of the warriorsoul and the spirit of youth! Think of Karna,—embodiment of the very spirit of challenge and adventure and action. Karna's words ring in my ears, again and again. When questioned as to his birth, he answers in flaming words which I wished were burnt into the soul of every youth :—"I am my own ancestor! You never ask the mighty Ganga whence it comes: alone its flow justifies itself. So shall my deeds justify me!" These characters in the ancient epics have a message for modern India.

The *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* are a rich store-house of culture. And India had travelling teachers who moved, from village to village, to recite to the multitudes incidents and verses from the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* and so to keep alive a memory of the heroic in our history and race-ideals. Where are such travelling teachers, today? And how many of India's young men, study the ancient Hindu epics which reflect a superior culture of the days, when men were not soft and luxury-loving, but simple and strong and rich in the resources of manliness, subordinating romance to *tapasyā* and self-control and the energy of action?

After summer comes autumn, when forces of decline appear. In the autumn stage of Hindu culture, logic-chopping theories and speculations got the better of the demands of life. *Shakti* retreated. A false conception of spirituality obtained ascendancy. Men sought salvation not in the field of life and its duties but in an asceticism of idleness, in a dreamy metaphysic, which denied the divine purpose of earth-life and its obligations.

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At this stage, Islam knocked at the gates of India. And a story has it that, when the Brahmin king of Sind asked his people to march against the invader from Arabia, most of them declined to defend their own country, saying :—"We would wear the *bhikkhu's* yellow robes : we seek *mukti* (salvation)." They forgot that *mukti* was not in retreat from life. *Mukti* is *shakti*. Spirituality is conquest. Religion is not inaction but the offering of all action at the Lotus-feet of the Lord.

After autumn comes winter,—the season of sleep. And in the winter stage of Hindu culture, the creative vision of the rishis was forgotten.

After winter cometh spring again. We have begun to re-awake since the last century. But the new spring is not yet. For the mechanistic, materialistic outlook,—a mark of the winter-stage of culture,—is still with us.

Current education is multiplying and with it has come impoverishment of inner life. Not a few of our graduates think that materialism is the last word in science and philosophy. The growing worship of material utility, the quick-spreading gospel of comfort-civilisation, deep denial of *brahmacharya* and ideals of the rishi-age are, to my mind, signs of the materialistic obsession masquerading as modern "enlightenment."

I am not depressed. For in the Veda of Nature,—the sacred scripture of the seasons,—I read how every winter may change to spring. And it may be that modern India, too, is to go through a cycle of materialism before a new epoch of our creative culture may arise.

THE ARYAN IDEAL

Of the dream in my soul of the new culture of the new epoch, I shall not pause to speak, today. One thing I profoundly believe in : the new culture of our new spring, the new renaissance of India, will be a synthetic culture. And in it will be found summed up and brought to higher fulfilment the rich promise of the culture evolved under the brooding of the Spirit of the Āryan *dharma*, the Hindu religion of ancient India. A few of the important contributions of this religion to our culture may be summed up thus :—

1. The *āshrama*-idea. In the whole range of civilisation, there is no more fruitful, no more ennobling idea than this, of the four-fold *āshrama*,—a basal concept of the Hindu Faith. The word *āshrama*, I interpret to mean "place of discipline, self-discipline." Modern civilisation has gone astray because it has trampled upon the *āshrama*-idea and, with the loud shouts of competition, noise and excitement, striven to make this earth a paradise of sense-pleasure, rather than the field where man is meant to be a soldier of the Ideal and to fight ease and enjoyment, passion and pride.

2. *Brahmacharya*. *Brahmacharya* was the basis of India's life, in the long ago. The *brahmacharya* ideal must be re-emphasised to save civilisation. Luxury is the death-warrant of civilisation. Simplicity is strength. In control of the senses is the secret of a people's continued vitality. The debt to the rishis, we read in ancient scriptures,

is paid off by *brahmacharya*. How many of us, today, have a sincere desire to pay off the debt to the rishis,—our mighty ancestors, who made India great, in the long ago?

3. The Spirit Universal. The supreme vision of the *Ātman* proclaimed by India's rishis has gone into the philosophy and art and literature of India. The Upanishads are, from cover to cover, eloquent with this vision of the One-in-all. In an Upanishad, we read :—

> As threads from a spider, as sparks from a fire, so from this *Atman* come forth all vital forces, all worlds, all gods, all beings. Its mystic name is Real of the real.

Again, we read in the *Mundakopanishad* :—

From Him all seas and mountains come,
From Him all rivers rolling on,
From Him all herbs and that One Soul,—
Essence of all that dwells within.
He in Whom the sky, the earth, the atmosphere
Are woven, and the mind,—with all life-breaths,—
Him alone know as the One Soul,—the Ātman He,—
The Bridge of Immortality.

Here are extracts from the *Svetasvatara Upanishad*, voicing in words of matchless beauty, the same vision of the One Universal *Ātman* :—

As the sun illumines and showers upon
All regions, above, below, East and West,
So that One God, glorious, adorable,
Rules all things created;
Over this whole world rules the One!

His Spirit filleth all the Universe;
He, the Lord,
Whose countenance is in all places,—
The Gracious One,
Whose presence is everywhere;
Yea,—in the fastness of the heart.

Handless, He holdeth :
Footless, he speedeth :
Eyeless, seeth He :
Earless, He heareth :
Knowing all, Himself Unknown!

Smaller than the small,
Greater than the great,
Is this Soul Who dwelleth in the heart.

Ageless, Ancient of the Day,
Primeval, All-Soul,
Pervading all things,
Birthless, Eternal,
Colourless, He lendeth hues to all this varied world.

Beginning of all,
The End wherein all things dissolve!
The Pure One, Brahman,
The Spirit Creative,
Source of all, abiding immanent,
Stay and Pillar of the Universe,

In Him is no darkness,
Nor day nor night!
The Gracious One, Imperishable,
Incomprehensible, Invisible, the Great Glory,—
They who know and love Him,
They come to Immortality.

In this vision of the One *Ātman* is the source of the Golden Rule which Jesus re-proclaimed in Palestine. "See God in your Self and in all, and see all in God, *i.e.* your Self: and, therefore, do unto others as you would be done by, and do not do unto them what ye would that they should not do unto you," saith a Hindu scripture.

Applied science needs this vision of the *Ātman*. For science, as Bertrand Russell recently said, "has been used for three purposes:—(1) to increase the total production of commodities; (2) to make wars more destructive; and (3) to substitute trivial amusements for those that had some artistic or hygienic value." Applied science has been largely used to increase *bhoga* and *himsā*. Man is becoming machine-dominated,—becoming a machine,—to make money! The state, itself, is becoming a machine,—a body without a soul.

Democracy will not come to its own, without a vision of the *Ātman*. There is a democracy that levels down. True democracy is that which levels up. The rishis had a vision of true democracy, for they realised that every one, no matter how poor, was a home of *ātma-shakti*, an abode of God.

Meister Eckhart, a German mystic, said:— "God is nearer to me than I am to myself." One of the rishis speaks of the body as a "city of God." Yet another says:—"Even as a grain of rice or the smallest granule of millet, so is the Golden Purusha in my heart............It is greater than the sky, greater than the ether, greater than the earth, greater than all existing things,—that Self in the self within me. On passing away from hence, I shall obtain that Self. And, verily, whosoever has this trust, for him there is no uncertainty."

4. Philosophy of Life. Out of this vision of the One *Ātman* grows a new sense of freedom. To see God in all is to see that all must move on to the one goal of freedom. Every one is royal : for in every one dwells the *Ātman*. This conception of freedom is, essentially, positive, not negative. Freedom is self-fulfilment. "I do not ask," says Nietzsche, "from what you are free but for what are you free!"

Freedom of the spirit,—is an important contribution of the Hindu *dharma* to the philosophy of life. Two worlds there be,—the world of Spirit and the world of sense. The world of sense is a machine-world. The world of Spirit is one of freedom. Man finds himself in chains of the senses. He is meant to be free. He must freely choose to belong to the world of Spirit, if he would be free with the freedom that belongs to the sons of God.

The Hindu Faith interprets life's *summum bonum* in terms of freedom, and freedom in terms of function. To be free is not to be idle but to function. The Gita,—perhaps, the greatest single philosophical poem in the world's literature,—is one magnificent song of the philosophy of life. And the Gita emphasises action. Not to renounce works but only the fruits thereof,—is the constant refrain of the Gita. Not God Himself may renounce action. Else would the world go into chaos. The universe is a dance of Shiva, and "destruction" is but a "moment" in Creative Activity.

5. Education,—a thing of the Spirit. Education, in the days of Hindu greatness, was in the hands of truly spiritual men. The rishis taught

in the *āshramas* of old. And the *āshrama*-ideal in education emphasised the following :—

(a) *Brahmacharya* the basis. Education is a pursuit of truth. And to seek truth we must shun passion and prejudice. Aristotle would not teach "ethics" to the incontinent. And to none, who was not a *brahmachāri*, was knowledge imparted, in the ancient *āshramas*. The aim of education is character-building. No character without will-power : and to build up *brahmacharya* is to build up will-power.

(b) Fellowship with the Guru. An education-centre was a *Gurukula*, where pupils were members of the family of the Guru. Students were addressed as "sons of the Guru." "May I be beloved and dear to thee!" said the Guru to his pupil. In a beautiful ceremony, the teacher would touch the chest of the boy with his fingers upward and repeat the words :—"Thy heart shall dwell in my heart. My mind thou shalt follow with thy mind." I am convinced that, in the coming days, emphasis will be put less on text-books and examinations, more on personality,—the purifying, inspiring personality of the teacher.

(c) Education as service. "See that the thread of the race is not broken," was the constant exhortation of the Guru to his pupil. Every *āshrama* was a home to teach simplicity, service, hero-worship and reverence for the race. The Guru always taught on condition that the pupil in his turn would pass on knowledge to others. And no fees were charged. Education was inspired by the ideal of *sevā*,—service to the race.

THE HOLY LAND OF HISTORY

The contributions of the Hindu *darshana* to pure sciences is a fascinating subject, but one with which I am not competent to deal. Prof. Sommerfeld of the University of Munich is one of the world's leading physicists. "India," he says, "is, perhaps to a much greater degree than we imagine, the mother of sciences."

Sir J. C. Bose is the first Indian scientist whom the Western men of science have accepted as their equal. And in the message of his fascinating experiments that plants have nervous, circulatory, locomotor and respiratory systems like those of animals, I hear a voice of the ancient rishis who, in the sacred Upanishads, pealed the most ravishing truth of the One Life in all.

Nor would time permit me to speak of the contributions of the Hindu *darshana* to mathematics and music, to art and architecture. Sufficient be it to note that when the Greeks came with Alexander to India, in the fourth century B. C., they found that the painting of frescoes had been carried to a high degree of perfection. The Greeks, also, found that Indians had buildings showing great skill in architecture. And even, today, may be seen ancient temples in South India most elaborately carved and well adorned with high conical towers, showing what Hindu *dharma* did for architecture, in the days when India had not turned away from the ancient vision to alien gods.

I must, also, pass over Hindu contributions in technics, economics, politics and psychology.

Prof. Winternitz has admitted that ancient India was rich in literature on agriculture, mining and mineralogy. "*Artha*," we read, "is the object of man's desires!" And the three principal occupations mentioned as building up *artha* are :—(1) agriculture; (2) cattle-rearing; and (3) trade.

In politics, the truth was recognized that the state was *shakti*, that every citizen must develop the virtue of manliness, that opulence was a part of the nation's *dharma*, that equally important was defence, that the culture-state must be guarded by the *kshatriyas* and nourished at once by agriculture and trade, and that the right attitude to adopt towards the non-Āryans was not to exploit them, nor extirpate them, but to assimilate them to the Āryan polity or to make them allies and friends. For freedom is fellowship. So thought the Āryan of this ancient land. Not so thinks the Āryan of the West. So Europe has her cults of aggressive nationalism. So Europe turns her wheel of violence. And she still must turn it, until she has a new philosophy of freedom and a new vision of life, and until she understands that the wheel of violence must give way to the wheel of *dharma*.

There is no time, too, to speak of the Hindu *dharma's* contributions to what I regard as the Science of sciences, the Master-science, the Royal Science of Yoga. And when these are better studied, the world will have more materials for the construction of a new psychology and a new philosophy. The Hindu science of Yoga is a three-fold study :—(1) of the conscious or empirical self; (2) of the subconscious self; and (3) of the super-conscious self. A few of the Hindu's contributions to this domain may be hurriedly noted thus :—

1. The Law of Self-building. This is beautifully expressed in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* : – "What one does and what one thinks, that he becomes."

2. The Value of Meditation. To meditate is not to vegetate, but to gather *shakti*. A *mantra* is a centre of forces. Meditation helps the inner processes of self-examination, discrimination, and purification. Meditation, also, has an effect on the physical body : meditation, like prayer, has a healing value.

3. Self-knowledge. To know yourself is to know that you are a channel of *shakti*, a centre of forces. To know yourself is, also, to know that within you are the *koshas* (vestures) which are not of the physical order. This physical body is but an outer vesture. You are greater than the *sthula sarira*. The brain is not the *Ātman*, but only an organ of the *Ātman*. Crush the organ, if you will : it goes. The organist, the player, the musician, the singer remains. The *Ātman* is greater than the physical body. Consciousness is greater than the brain.

Within you, too, is the *prānamaya kosha*,—the vibrating vesture. There is the *manomaya kosha*,—the vesture of the mind. There is the *vignāna-maya kosha*,—the intuitional centre. There is the *ānanda maya kosha*. And none knoweth his true Self who does not contact the *ānanda*-centre. "Brahman," we read, "is *Ānanda*." May I not say, *ānanda* is joy, is bliss, is love, is the energy of the

Ever-Effulgent? So we read in the *Brihadaranyakopanishad* :—"As is the sight of the sweetest honey to the traveller in the desert, so is the perception of the Ever-Effulgent!"

Yoga is perception of the Ever-Beautiful, the Ever-Blessed One. Yoga is union with the One Beloved. "With my own heart," sings the Vedic rishi, "I commune, how shall Varuna and I be at one?" Not to ease and soft repose but to a new life is called he who would tread the path of Yoga. It is the call of the Cross. This Yoga is a yoke : in Latin we have the significant word "*jugum*." "Know thyself," said the greatest of the Greeks. And to know thyself, said the Hindu rishi, forget thyself ! Realise thyself by being in harmony with the Tao,—said the sage of China. And the Hindu sage said :—"To realise thyself, renounce thyself!"

Creation itself, says the rishi, is an act of sacrifice. The one supreme aim of Vedic revelation, we read, is to teach the doctrine of sacrifice. And the injunction is given, again and again :—"Spread the sacrifice!" There is a text in the *Atharva Veda*, which says :—"From the leavings of the sacrifice (*yagna*) sprang the Rik, etc." The idea of *yagna* is prominent in the Vedas. If I were asked, "What is the soul of Hindu Culture?" I would say in one word, "Sacrifice."

The prominence given to Agni in the *Rigveda* is not without a meaning. Agni is the flaming spirit of sacrifice. The day's programme in the *āshramas* of old opened with a *havan* ceremony,—a ceremony of fire. To the *brahmachāri*, the Guru said :—"Put fuel in the fire!" So was the idea placed before the pupil that the very heart of knowledge was sacrifice.

Sri Rama becomes very vital after he abandons the palace for the *tapobana*. Epic heroes in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana* achieve in the measure in which they renounce. The man in the *grahastha āshrama* was enjoined to earn only to spend his wealth for others. The Brahmin was to gather knowledge only to pass it on to his pupils.

"This have I heard in my heart, that life is given to scatter, not to hoard," sang the Irish patriot-martyr, Padric Pearse. So, also, sang the sages of India. Marriage itself, they urged, was not for personal pleasure, but for preserving the thread of the race. *Yagna*, not *bhoga!*

Hindu democracy had respect for aristocracy of culture and character. It is true, there were four classes, but there was no class-cleavage : for rights were linked with duties. The status of women was high and she, too, was taught that life was a school of sacrifice : the Hindu woman was a picture of *sevā* and self-denial. The students' *yagna* was *brahmacharya* : impurity was a sin against Agni, the spirit of sacrifice.

The daily *Gāyatri*, the twilight *sandhyā*, the worship of Savitr, were symbols of the sacrificial principle. Is not the sun's daily life one of sacrifice? The sun is perpetually pouring out energy in order that the earth may live. The sun sends out its rays,—fragments of itself,—to nourish the world. Life on earth would be extinct but for the perpetual sacrifice of the sun. So the *Gāyatri* hymn says :—"We meditate on that adorable effulgence of the Lord Savitr, from whom we derive the stimulus for our mental strength and our activity." Our thoughts and actions are due, in no small measure, to the sacrificial energy of the sun. The same truth of sacrifice was recognized in the daily prayer of the Brahmin at his meals :—"May the food I eat be an offering to Brahman!"

I spoke of the rishis' religion as being not an "ism" but a *darshana*,—a vision of the *dharma* or Laws which support the Universe. The supreme Law is the Law of *Yagna*, sacrifice. Only let me add that this *yagna* is a joy-offering : this sacrifice is an oblation of *ānanda*. This *yagna* is fullness. Out of this fullness of Life, God gives Himself to us. In joy should we not, too, offer ourselves to Him?

This life,—what is it? A little drop of energy borrowed for a while. Why regret returning it when needed to help the purpose of the Universe? This life,—what is it? A loan from the All-Giver. Why be sorry to surrender it when needed for a better use? Give, give all the Cosmic Purpose wants! And give in joy. There is the rich meaning of *yagna*. "What gift will Varuna accept?" asked the Vedic rishi. And the ancient answer is re-sung in the Song Divine, the Bhagavad Gita :—"Whatsoever thou eatest, whatsoever thou doest,—do it unto Me!"

Man is a time-builder : how? He accumulates experiences. But he, also, carries with him eternity. And so there is history. For history is made by sacrifice. And in sacrifice,—*yagna*,—man touches the Eternal. Man's dimension is bigger than time : man's dimension is eternity, creative sacrifice. In sacrifice is man linked up with God Himself. In and through sacrifice man becomes creative. And is not the deepest aspiration of India sacrificial ?

Yagnavalkya renouncing wealth to go joyfully from home into homelessness, the Buddha leaving the palace to put on poverty in quest of *Ātmagnān*, Shankara leaving even his beloved mother behind to go into the great loneliness for gathering power to revivify the Hindu Faith, Chaitanya abandoning his chair of logic and comforts of domestic life to be a wandering ministrel of his Divine Master, Dayanand and Vivekanand and Keshub Brahmananda surrendering their all in the search and service of the Lord, these and many, many more,—bear they not witness to the supreme call of India's culture through the ages? For these, whom I have just mentioned, were all men of culture : and they realised that culture flowered into sacrifice. Of the Buddha we read in the ancient scripture :—

> *Kalpa after kalpa, through every form of existence,*
> *Hath the Blessed One wrought deeds of sacrifice :*
> *Verily, his boundless love is as the immensity of space!*

And in yet another book we read of the Bodhisattva. On the threshold of Heaven standeth he, about to enter into bliss. Just then, from a corner of the far-off earth, comes a cry :—"Behold, I suffer! Is there none to help.?" And the Bodhisattva says :—"Back to the earth must I go, for a cry of pain cometh from a human heart." And back to the earth he comes, renouncing the bliss of the Heaven-world!

The Eternal built the world, we read, out of sacrifice. And in sons and daughters of sacrifice is a people's hope, a people's destiny. This is the meaning of history. This, this is the eternal message atonce of culture and religion. To this message was India true, in the long ago. Therefore is she to me the holy land of history. Therefore is India the Ancient dear to me,—dear and sacred, as India the Immortal.

To lose life is to gain the Imperishable. "*Mrityor mā 'mritam gamaya!*" "Through death lead me into Deathlessness." So sang the Vedic rishi. And is not the same aspiration sung in that noble hymn of the youngest faith,—the hymn of the great Gurus and martyrs of Sikh history,—the hymn, which I regard as richer in the message at once of culture and religion than the noblest songs and stories of Greece and Rome?

I am a sacrifice to Thee,—
Eternal Verity!

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